

Reply Under 37 C.F.R. §1.116
Expedited Procedure - Group Art Unit : 2171
Application No. 09/852,877
Filed: 5/10/2001
Attorney Docket No.: 23140-1

CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 2, 4, 5 and 11 without prejudice and without disclaimer of subject matter.

Please amend Claims 1 and 12 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An information gathering system for allowing a user to verify the user's vote, the system comprising:
 - at least one computer;
 - at least one ~~output printing~~ device coupled to the computer;
 - a software component executable by the at least one computer, the software component being arranged to:
 - assign a unique identifier corresponding to an official ballot, the unique identifier being assigned based on a user's act of voting;
 - store a user's voting choices and ~~corresponding~~ the unique identifier in a tabulation database; and
 - cause the computer to output on the ~~output printing~~ device:
 - a voting stub, the voting stub including the unique identifier; and
 - the official ballot, the official ballot including the unique identifier corresponding to the official ballot and the user's voting choices,

wherein the unique identifier on the voting stub is visible to allow the user to access the tabulation database to verify the integrity of the user's vote as printed on the official ballot after the official ballot has been tabulated.

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2-6. CANCELLED

7. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the tabulation database corresponds to an official vote tabulation database.

8. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the validated user accesses the tabulation database via a communication network.

9. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein a bar code corresponding to the unique identifier is printed on at least one of the voting stub and the official ballot.

10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the unique identifier is a randomly generated number.

11. CANCELLED

12. (Currently Amended) A method of voting, comprising:
requiring a voter to provide to the computer a response to the ballot;
assigning a unique identifier to the voter's response to the ballot;

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storing the voter's response to the ballot and corresponding the assigned unique identifier in a database;

producing a first tangible record of the response for retention by the voter, the first tangible record including a the assigned unique identifier corresponding to the response;

producing a second tangible record of the response, the second tangible record including the voter's response to the ballot and the assigned unique identifier;

collecting the second tangible record;

storing the second tangible record; and

using the unique identifier to allow the voter to confirm that the collected second tangible record represents the vote intended to be cast by the voter by allowing the user to access the database using the unique identifier.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, further comprising confirming that the voter's vote was printed on the second tangible record as intended by the voter, wherein the confirmation occurs after the second tangible record is collected.

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14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein requiring the voter to provide to the computer a response to the ballot comprises:

- inputting the response into the computer;
- checking the response by comparing the response to a selected standard;
- rejecting the response if the response does not meet the requirements of the selected standard; and
- requiring the voter to correct the rejected response.

15-18. CANCELLED

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein confirming that the second tangible record represents the vote intended to be cast by the voter further includes comparing the voter's response to the ballot stored in the database with the voter's response to the ballot printed on the second tangible record.

20-33. CANCELLED

34. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the unique identifier is printed on the official ballot and voting stub to allow for confidential verification of the integrity of the user's response without giving the user a physical copy of the user's vote.

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